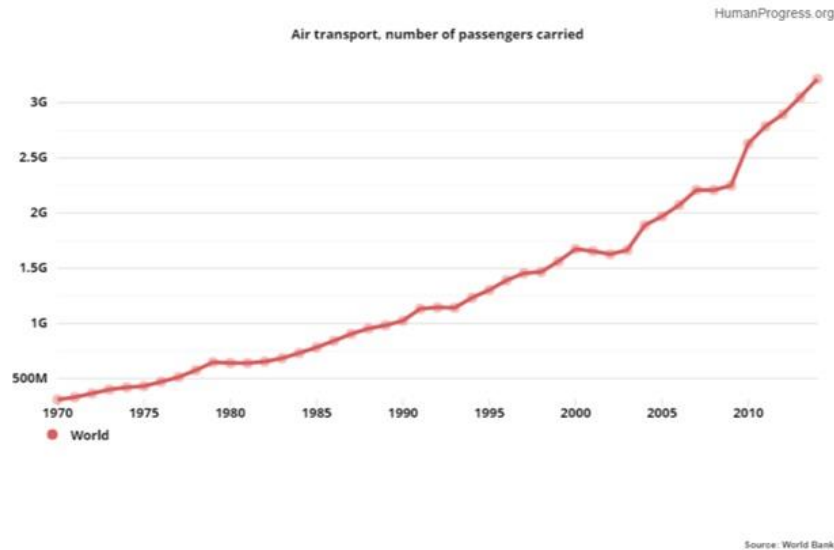


## Billions of Passengers Travel by Air Every Year

Marian Tupy

December 1, 2015

With one travelling season over (Thanksgiving) and another one about to begin (Christmas and New Year), it is a good time to acknowledge that a greater proportion of human kind than ever can enjoy the miracle of flight, and enjoy the experience of visiting far-off places. As you can see at [HumanProgress](#), the number of air passengers carried globally increased from 310 million in 1970 and 3.2 billion in 2014, an increase of over 900 percent. World's population, in the meantime, increased only 97 percent over the same time period, rising from 3.7 billion to 7.3 billion.



Over time, flying has been greatly democratized, and made safer and cheaper. What has not changed much since the 1960s, however, is the speed of flying. Consider a flight from London to Sydney. In 1965, a plane had to make 6 stops along the way in order to refuel. A plane today has to refuel only once, because it can carry more fuel and is much more fuel efficient. But, the length of time it takes to get from London to Sydney is not greatly different, having declined from 29 hours to 23 hours.

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